

Recruiter honored for outstanding performance

Staff Sgt. Brian Merritt, a recruiting and retention noncommissioned officer from the Virginia Army National Guard, was one of 86 recruiters nationwide honored by Army Lt. Gen. Timothy Kadavy, the director of the Army National Guard, during a ceremony at Arlington Hall Station, Aug. 3, 2015, in Arlington, Va. The nationwide “9 in 90 Recruiting Challenge” asked recruiters to enlist nine applicants during a 90-day window. Merritt, the 2014 National Guard Rookie Recruiter of the Year, finished with a total of 17 accessions in the time frame, good enough for second in the nation.

“This challenge allowed me to reach down and pick myself up by the boot laces and go that extra mile, knowing that I was being compared to other recruiters not only in my state, but across the nation,” Merritt said.

It was not going to be easy when the average is about three in that same time frame.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/08/18/7883/>



Staff Sgt. Brian Merritt is awarded the Army Commendation Medal by Army Lt. Gen. Timothy Kadavy, the director of the Army National Guard, Aug. 3, 2015 in Arlington, Va.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Whittington named First Army Deputy Commanding General for Operations

Maj. Gen. Charles W. Whittington Jr. has been named First Army Deputy Commanding General for Operations according to an announcement made Aug. 26, 2015, by Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia. Whittington most recently served as the commander of the 29th Infantry Division.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/08/26/7921/>

Va. Air Guard trains to provide “big picture” service during emergencies

Airmen from the 192nd Intelligence Squadron, 192nd Fighter Wing based at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, joined forces with the Virginia Joint Forces Headquarters, Civil Air Patrol and county agencies during an incident awareness and assessment exercise held July 13-24, 2015, at Camp Pendleton, Va.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/08/13/7891/>

Va. Guard OCS commissions 17 new officers

In a ceremony held Aug. 22, 2015, 17 officer candidates enrolled in Class 57 of the Virginia Army National Guard’s Officer Candidate School received their commissions in a traditional graduation ceremony held at Fort Pickett’s 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/08/26/7903/>

Commonwealth ChalleNGe Youth Academy Class 43 graduates 92 cadets

The Virginia Commonwealth ChalleNGe Youth Academy graduated 92 cadets during a commencement ceremony Aug. 22, 2015, at Ocean Lakes High School in Virginia Beach. Dr. Michelle Woodhouse, provost of the Fred W. Beazley Portsmouth Campus of Tidewater Community College, was the guest speaker.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/08/25/7909/>

Mark Your Calendars!

**Sept. 9, 2015
3-116th Infantry
Departure Ceremony**

A departure ceremony for the Winchester-based 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment will be held at 11 a.m. Sept. 9, 2015, at Romenick Field on Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

Approximately 450 Soldiers will mobilize for federal active service for duty in Qatar to conduct security missions in support of ongoing overseas contingency operations. After the departure ceremony they will train at Fort Bliss for approximately 30 to 45 days before heading overseas.

For more information and to RSVP, please contact Capt. Erik Bauer at 703-774-8793.

Uniform is ACU or business casual.

Army Guard medics refresh training at Fort Pickett

Virginia Army National Guard medics from units across the commonwealth came together Aug. 4-7, 2015, at Fort Pickett, Va., to conduct vital sustainment training that enables the medics to remain certified on life-saving techniques.

The 68W Health Care Specialist sustainment training is a mandatory biennial requirement for medics across the U.S. Army. Failure to go through the training and recertify leads to revocation of the 68W military occupational specialty and renders medics unable to provide valuable medical support to their units.

"It's a refresher," explained Capt. Nicole Davis, the Virginia National Guard's 68W coordinator and the executive officer of the Virginia National Guard's Medical Command, on the course. "We're hitting the main points here."

Davis explained that the training is broken down into different sections, called tables, that focus on different areas of medical care, like trauma, the airway, and IVs. The students spend the first several days in the classroom going over the seven tables before heading out to the field on the last day to conduct their culminating, hands-on exercise, through medical lanes training.

"Lanes training, or skills validation, is my favorite," explained Staff Sgt. Jennifer T. Johnson, the medical readiness noncommissioned officer for 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment. "It's when we get to use all we have learned in the classroom with hands on and get to run at full speed. It makes you feel good knowing you can use your skills to save a life."

The medics had to navigate through both a trauma lane and a medical evaluation lane, taking turns reacting to and treating the different ailments of their "patients." As they evaluated their casualties and administered aid, an instructor watched their every move, answering questions on the notional ailments and asking the medics questions about their choices in aiding their casualties.

Spc. Kelly Imperial, a medic with the 1033rd Transportation Company, 276th Engineer Battalion said she was nervous about the practical exercise at first, but that, "it helps you remember the things that you might have missed and it's an essential tool for us."



Virginia Army National Guard medics work in teams of two through the culminating exercise of a four-day sustainment training course Aug. 7, 2015, at Fort Pickett, Va.

All medics must undergo the refresher training and the course included medics going through the recertification process for the first time, as well as senior medics with decades of experience.

"Medical doctrine is constantly changing, plus our skills are perishable," explained Johnson, on the importance of the course.

Aside from fulfilling a mandatory requirement for the medics, Davis explained that the training also provides a chance for them to share and learn from one another.

"There might be only two or three medics at the unit level, so this is also a time for them to be with their peers, to share stories, to share ideas and to build their confidence," Davis explained.

Davis said her hope for the medics is that they leave the course confident of their skillset.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/08/24/7896/>

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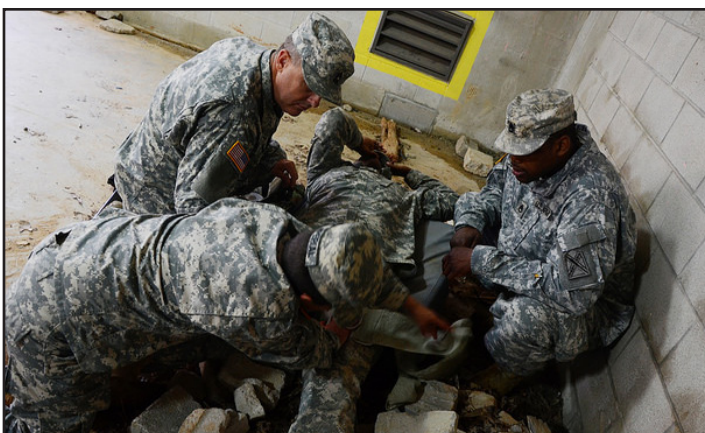
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Medics from the Virginia Army National Guard work in teams to treat simulated casualties during a four-day sustainment training exercise held Aug. 4-7, 2015, at Fort Pickett, Va.